

REMARKS

Claims 1-67 are pending in this application, with claims 1, 18, 42, 46, and 49 independent.

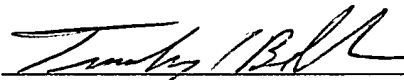
Applicant thanks the Examiner for extending his time and effort in our telephone conference of January 24, 2007, to resolve the disposition of these claims. In this phone conference, the Examiner indicated that he will be withdrawing the finality status of this application and issuing a new non-final Office Action in the upcoming weeks. Because of this disposition, as agreed with the Examiner, no substantive response is needed by Applicant at this time. As discussed with the Examiner, Applicant is filing a Notice of Appeal to preserve Applicant's rights.

In closing, Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner to reconsider this application and its early allowance. Applicant invites the Examiner to call Applicant's representative at (206) 622-4900 to resolve any remaining issues.

The Director is authorized to charge any additional fees due by way of this Amendment, or credit any overpayment, to our Deposit Account No. 19-1090. Again, Applicant's representative thanks the Examiner for his prompt and courteous attention.

Respectfully submitted,

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